

25 June 1953

NSC BRIEFING

BURMA (short)

- I. After ten years firm rule, Burma now politically splintered.
  - A. Until this spring, govt dominated by Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) led by Socialists and including peasant and labor organizations.
    1. AFPFL has been led by Premier U Nu and Deputy Premiers Ba Swe and Kyaw Nyein--latter two leaders of Socialists.
- II. Over past two years relations between U Nu and Kyaw Nyein cooled.
  - A. Policy was not issue--main cause was patronage.
  - B. In April, polite agreement was reached for independent U Nu and Socialists to go separate ways and have no confidence vote in parliament.
- III. As both sides frantically lined up support tempers rose and there fear of violence, but army and police kept control.
  - A. On 9 June, U Nu won by narrow margin--127 to 119.
    1. Victory possible only with 44 votes of Commie-dominated National United Front.
  - B. U Nu swears he made no commitments to NUF, but it seems inevitable he must grant some favors.
  - C. Most importantly, NUF now can exploit U Nu's great popularity through its association with him.
- IV. U Nu deposed as president of AFPFL and expelled.
- V. U Nu expected to call for national elections, in late summer.
  - A. Nu's dependence on NUF is embarrassment to him.
  - B. Nu confident he can roundly defeat opponents, thus be able to shed NUF.

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**VI. Others view possible outcome differently.**

**A. Entirely possible that NUF would be chief beneficiary.**

1. Against united AFPFL in '56, NUF captured 34% of vote.
2. With AFPFL split, NUF should do much better.

**B. Also possible elections would be accompanied by considerable violence.**

1. Numerous insurgent groups, including Commies, will be tempted to intimidate isolated villagers.

**VII. In sum, there are definite dangers.**

**A. Overt Commies have far more room for maneuvering.**

**B. Until after elections govt business likely to be virtually at stand-still.**

**C. While security forces have thus far kept lid on, widespread violence might yet break out.**

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